

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No.: 10/686,522  
Attorney Docket No.: Q72552

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended): A dry grinding system comprising:

grinding means for dry-grinding a material to be ground;

first classification means for classifying a ground product obtained through the grinding means, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size;

second classification means for further classifying the coarse powder obtained through the first classification means, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size; and

returning means for returning to the grinding means the coarse powder obtained through the second classification means,

wherein the second classification means includes:

classification means for further classifying the resultant fine powder into ultrafine powder having a relatively small average particle size and fine powder having a relatively large average particle size; and

returning means for returning to the grinding means the ultrafine powder obtained through this classification means.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No.: 10/686,522  
Attorney Docket No.: Q72552

2. (currently amended): A dry grinding system ~~according to claim 1, which further~~  
~~comprises~~comprising:

grinding means for dry-grinding a material to be ground;

first classification means for classifying a ground product obtained through the grinding  
means, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and coarse powder having  
a relatively large average particle size;

second classification means for further classifying the coarse powder obtained through  
the first classification means, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and  
coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size;

returning means for returning to the grinding means the coarse powder obtained through  
the second classification means;

third classification means for further classifying the fine powder obtained through the  
second classification means, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and  
coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size; and

returning means for returning to the grinding means the coarse powder obtained through  
the third classification means,

wherein the third classification means includes:

classification means for further classifying the resultant fine powder into ultrafine powder  
having a relatively small average particle size and fine powder having a relatively large average  
particle size; and

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No.: 10/686,522  
Attorney Docket No.: Q72552

returning means for returning to the grinding means the ultrafine powder obtained through this classification means.

3. (currently amended): A dry grinding system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the grinding means is a ball mill.

4. (currently amended): A dry grinding system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the first classification means is an air classifier.

5. (currently amended): A dry grinding system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the second classification means is a sieve.

6. (original): A dry grinding system according to claim 2, wherein the third classification means is a sieve.

7. (canceled).

8. (canceled).

9. (original): A dry grinding system according to claim 1, which further comprises collection means for collecting the fine powder obtained through the first classification means,

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No.: 10/686,522  
Attorney Docket No.: Q72552

and collection means for collecting the fine powder obtained through the second classification means, wherein the collection means for collecting the fine powder obtained through the second classification means includes means for removing iron.

10. (original): A dry grinding system according to claim 2, which further comprises collection means for collecting the fine powder obtained through the first classification means, and collection means for collecting the fine powder obtained through the third classification means, wherein the collection means for collecting the fine powder obtained through the third classification means includes means for removing iron.

11. (original): A dry grinding system according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the fine powder obtained through the first classification means has an average particle size of 5 to 25  $\mu\text{m}$ .

12. (original): A dry grinding system according to claim 9, wherein the fine powder obtained through the second classification means has an average particle size of 45 to 90  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a bulk density of 1.7 to 2.3.

13. (original): A dry grinding system according to claim 10, wherein the fine powder obtained through the third classification means has an average particle size of 45 to 90  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a bulk density of 1.7 to 2.3.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No.: 10/686,522  
Attorney Docket No.: Q72552

14. (currently amended): A dry grinding system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the material to be ground is alumina.

15. (withdrawn): A dry grinding method comprising: a grinding step of dry-grinding a material to be ground; a first classification step of classifying a ground product obtained through the grinding step, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size; a second classification step of further classifying the coarse powder obtained through the first classification step, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size; and a returning step of returning to the grinding step the coarse powder obtained through the second classification step.

16. (withdrawn): A dry grinding method according to claim 15, wherein the second classification step includes: a classification step of further classifying the resultant fine powder into ultrafine powder having a relatively small average particle size and fine powder having a relatively large average particle size; and a returning step of returning to the grinding step the ultrafine powder obtained through this classification step.

17. (withdrawn): A dry grinding method according to claim 15 or 16, which further comprises a collection step of collecting the fine powder obtained through the first classification step, and a collection step of collecting the fine powder obtained through the second

classification step, wherein the collection step of collecting the fine powder obtained through the second classification step includes a step of removing iron.

18. (withdrawn): A dry grinding method according to claim 15, which further comprises: a third classification step of further classifying the fine powder obtained through the second classification step, into fine powder having a relatively small average particle size and coarse powder having a relatively large average particle size; and a returning step of returning to the grinding step the coarse powder obtained through the third classification step.

19. (withdrawn): A dry grinding method according to claim 18, wherein the third classification step includes: a classification step of further classifying the resultant fine powder into ultrafine powder having a relatively small average particle size and fine powder having a relatively large average particle size; and a returning step of returning to the grinding step the ultrafine powder obtained through this classification step.

20. (withdrawn): A dry grinding method according to claim 18 or 19, which further comprises a collection step of collecting the fine powder obtained through the first classification step, and a collection step of collecting the fine powder obtained through the third classification step, wherein the collection step of collecting the fine powder obtained through the third classification step includes a step of removing iron.